

NEW ENERGY ECONOMY HIGHLIGHTS

Building on the success of the last two years of New Energy Economy legislation, including the doubling of the state's renewable energy standard, the legislature and Gov. Ritter continue to make Colorado a national and global leader in the New Energy Economy. Together we are creating jobs, reducing our carbon footprint, and increasing our nation's security. This year's legislation includes:

SB09-51 (Carroll/Levy) – Helps home and business-owners afford solar energy systems by providing treasury bonds to participating banks and lenders for renewable energy and efficiency projects and by enabling innovative residential financing models that can spread out expensive upfront costs over several years, similar to purchasing and financing a car.

HB09-1149, Solar Home Prewire (Merrifield/M. Carroll) -- Requires homebuilders to offer prospective homebuyers the option of having their home pre-wired for solar or having a system installed, making it easier to finance renewable energy along with a home mortgage.

HB09-1331, Incentives for Efficient Motor Vehicles (Gagliardi/Boyd) – Updates and extends tax credits for fuel-efficient vehicles and vehicle conversions such as plug-in electric hybrids and compressed natural gas.

SB09-098, Tax Exempt Blended Diesel Products (Schwartz/Vigil) -- Simplifies the tax rebate structure to make blended biodiesel a more financially appealing alternative to traditional diesel.

SB09-092, State Motor Vehicles Use Natural Gas (Kopp / Marostica) -- Requires the significant increase in use of alternative fuels by state-owned motor vehicles, focusing particularly on compressed natural gas as an alternative fuel.

HB09-1312, K-12 School Loans (Kerr/Schwartz & Romer) -- Creates a loan program to help schools pay for renewable energy projects, as well as hybrid and electric buses, so that education dollars can be spent where they belong – in the classroom.

SB09-124, Extend Ag Energy-Related Projects (Isgar/Roberts) – Extends funding to the Colorado Agricultural Value-Added Development Board to promote agricultural renewable energy-related projects and research.

HB09-1345, Electric Utilities Integrate Transmission Infrastructure (Solano/Schwartz) -- Directs the public utilities commission (PUC) to study and report to the general assembly on the construction plans of owners and operators of electric transmission facilities in Colorado. The work will help guide how best to ensure transmission projects can deliver power from renewable sources to the grid.

SB09-177, New Solar Facility Property Tax Valuation (Schwartz/Vigil) -- This bill changes the method for requiring property values assessment of solar energy facilities to reflect a similar method currently used for wind generation facilities. This will mean longer-term economic benefit to the local community over the life of a large-scale solar system.

SB09-075, Low-speed Electric Self-propelled Vehicles (Schwartz/Marostica) -- This bill authorizes the operation of low-speed electric vehicles on roads with a speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less.

HB09-1346, Recovery & Reinvestment Fin Act Of 2009 (T. Carroll/B. Shaffer) -- This bill compliments the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and helps the Governor's Energy Office (GEO) with bonding. Upon the passage of this bill, the GEO will be able to utilize the resources of the state Treasurer's office to issue bonds for renewable energy projects.

SB09-297, Expedite Federal Stimulus Act Projects (Sandoval/Judd) -- This bill specifically addresses the issues associated with the GEO, Colorado Public Utilities Commission, and the Clean Energy Funds in regards to the State waiver process and funding from ARRA.

SB09-039, Conserve Energy Tiered Rates Incentive (Schwartz/Curry) -- Authorizes cooperative electric associations to approve revenue-neutral, reasonable rates, charges, services, classifications, and facilities that establish a graduated rate for increased energy consumption by residential customers, giving due consideration to the impact of such rate on low-income customers. Allows associations to utilize a community energy fund for energy efficiency, energy conservation, weatherization, and renewable energy purposes.

HB09-1126, Encourage Solar Thermal Installations (Hullingshorst/Schaffer) -- This bill allows local governments to provide the same incentives for solar thermal installations as may now be provided for solar electric installations. This bill also adds a corresponding exemption from state sales and use tax.